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The Gull

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Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter
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HIGH NOON FOR WETLANDS

In mid-April, many Golden Gate Audubon members received an Action Alert telling them that the Congressional "Wetlands Task Force" was about to hold a hearing on wetlands in Roseville, northeast of Sacramento, on April 19.

This task force, and its companion "Endangered Species Task Force," had been traveling around the country, purportedly to determine what "Americans" felt about wetlands and endangered species. It is important to note that none of the hearings were held near centers of environmental awareness, such as LA or the Bay Area or New York City or Washington, D.C. or San Antonio, Texas. All were held in rural communities where the task forces could attract large numbers of farmers who, through expensive misinformation campaigns mounted by the wise-use movement, have come to believe that these laws threaten their lives and livelihood. ("The Endangered Species Act" (next page) demonstrates how mistruths are used to generate fear.)

Both the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act are on the chopping block in Congress this year. The two task forces are travelling around searching for horror stories that will lend legitimacy to their attempt to destroy these laws.

We were tremendously pleased that, on very short notice, over 65 Bay Area citizens joined us on buses chartered by GGAS for the trip to Roseville. Our numbers were supplemented by about forty other wetlands supporters from the Central Valley. An equal number of farmers and developers were present in the audience.

It was a sorry performance that we all witnessed. The legislative panel consisted of two Republican Representatives, John Doolittle and Richard Pombo, and no Democrats.

Of approximately 15 invited witnesses, only two represented the environmental community, a commercial fisherman and a member of the California Native Plant Society. Two others, a farmer and a duck club manager, complained about the onerous regulatory burden, but at least stated that wetlands must be preserved. The rest related sad stories of frustrated attempts to fill wetlands thwarted by evil regulators. These stories often reached unbelievable levels of rhetoric. One witness stated that she was grilled by the FBI who told her that her ease of filling a few acres of wetlands was of "national significance" and that she was threatened with prison. (It's not surprising she faced a possible prison term since she had, after all, probably violated the law, but none of the witnesses evidently understood the concept that violating an environmental law is the same as violating any other law.)

We are highly suspicious of the accuracy of these stories. Would the FBI really spend its time on a wetlands fill case of only a few acres? Hard to believe. And in the past, when similar horror stories were investigated, they proved to be distorted or completely untrue. For example, there was the story of a rural woman who wanted to plant a garden, but was thwarted by wetlands regulations. Investigators could never find the woman nor the house.

We witnessed some fine examples of "special interests." Every speaker told of how their personal investments faced impediments because of environmental law. The legislators allowed none of the agencies to defend themselves or to state what really happened. Nor did they allow the public to step forward and tell how environmental laws preserve our quality of life. We could not explain that when one landowner destroys a wetland, the neighbor's house floods because the water no longer has any place to go; nor that wetlands help preserve our water quality and quantity, our fisheries and our recreational industry.

It was a true kangaroo court. Sadly, it is all too representative of what is taking place in Congress this year. The facts about issues are irrelevant. Law is being made based on unverified hearsay and rhetoric, not based on facts. Representative Jimmy Hayes has said, when challenged that his definition of wetlands was not scientific, that Congress is not dealing with science but

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with policy. It is truly a scary time for all of us. But there is hope and there are opportunities to act.

The most immediate need is letters to Senator Dianne Feinstein. Tell her that she must support the Endangered Species Act, and that she should not allow it to be weakened in any way, including by the imposition of cost-benefit analysis (i.e. forcing the Fish and Wildlife Service to prove that we will get more economic benefit from saving an endangered species than by letting it become extinct—a very difficult test indeed, when endangered species benefits are often intangible). She also needs to hear from everyone that the Clean Water Act must not be weakened and that wetlands law must not be weakened. Her address is: Senator Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510

The GGAS Conservation Committee meets the first Monday of the month in SF and the second Monday of the month in Berkeley to discuss and act on these issues as well as those of more local interest and importance. We need more members, particularly in the East Bay, and urge you to attend and make your voice heard..

You can also join our Action Alert team and receive notices about critical hearings and important letters that need writing. We won't overwhelm you – you can expect three or four a year. (See article on page 59.) If ever there was a year that required citizen action to preserve our natural world, this is it! Please help us.

Note: In response to our Action Alert we received a letter from a member challenging our assertion that these task forces were Republican, and insisting that Republicans can also be environmentalists. The author was absolutely right: the environment is not a partisan issue. Some of the most ferocious anti-wetlands legislators are Democrats, like Jimmy Hayes from Louisiana, and a few of our best wetlands friends are Republicans, like Senator John Chafee from Rhode Island. But it is the Republican majority that is passing the "Contract With America" which has the abolition of environmental regulation as a cornerstone of its goals. The "takings" law and

the "risk assessment" and "unfunded mandates" laws all will cause irremediable harm to our natural world if signed into law. It is the Republican "Contract" that is causing the harm and it is time for environmentally concerned Republicans to tell their legislators that this "Contract" is not what they voted for.

Arthur Feinstein

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Congress appears intent on dismantling all the federal environmental protections that were so agonizingly won in the 1970s and '80s. The Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act all face either significant weakening or total repeal. And on what is this headlong rush to annihilation based? Certainly not on fact. Let's take a few examples concerning the Endangered Species Act.

The destruction of homes in the Los Angeles area during the 1993 wildfires was blamed on an endangered species, the Tipton kangaroo rat. Critics asserted that because brush around the houses was left intact to provide a home for the kangaroo rat, the fire spread to those houses. A General Accounting Office investigation revealed that the truth was just the opposite: brush had been removed from some of the homes, yet they were still destroyed. The fire was so intense that no amount of brush clearing would have made any difference.

In 1994, Central Valley farmer Ming Tang Lin was accused of destroying endangered species habitat and prosecuted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. According to the media, the Service was picking on a poor immigrant farmer who was just trying to earn a living, who didn't understand English, and who did not know that there were endangered species on his land. What was the real story?

Mr. Lin was notified no less than three times, twice by personal visits, that there were endangered species on his land. Instead of seeking a permit, he chose to destroy the land. He probably could have obtained a permit allowing him to farm most of his land, with small modifications, since the records show that 99% of all endangered species

permit applications made between 1976 and 1986 were approved completely or with minimal adjustments to the project. So, Mr. Lin was well aware of endangered species on his land. Additionally, the Department of Justice found that this "poor" immigrant had bank deposits of \$2.5 million in 1991. Perhaps a poor command of English was responsible for the false statements on his income tax, failures to file tax returns for 1991 through 1993, false information on his driver's license application, and lying under oath.

The last case is the very recent flooding of the Pajaro River. The first words in the press were, "It's the fault of an endangered salamander." As we all learned shortly afterwards, this simply was not true. Yet for two days this false story got major headlines. Three stories, three misrepresentations.

Who is getting hurt by the Endangered Species Act? Big timber companies, mining companies, developers, and agri-business are spending a lot of money to make people think the act is damaging their businesses. Yet in Oregon, reduced timber cutting has created new opportunities that have catapulted the state into the ranks of the nation's highest in employment and economic growth.

The Endangered Species Act means that cancer cures yet to be found in endangered plants will not disappear from the earth. The Act insures that our foodstocks will have a sufficiently mixed genetic base that one plague will not wipe out all of our wheat or corn. The Act helps us to behave like good shepherds to our natural world, ensuring that our children and grandchildren will have a natural world to cherish and enjoy.

But Congress is intent on dismantling the Act. This month the House Endangered Species Task Force is holding hearings in carefully selected locations in California, all of them far from environmentally aware citizenry in the Los Angeles and Bay areas. But they can't escape the mails. Senator Dianne Feinstein has already voted for a moratorium on the further listing of endangered or threatened species. Write to her and to your Representative.

News from the Ranch

Dan Murphy

PUBLIC SEASON CONTINUES

There are still about 6 weeks left to visit the Ranch this year. It's too late for wildflowers, but perhaps we can interest you in this year's heron and egret bloom. As the wildflower season shifts to the mountains, fledgling birds offer a beauty as unique as any flower. Join us in enjoying spring's end and the heron and egret bloom of '95.

GGAS will be providing hosts on July 4, 8, 9, 15, and 16. Call (510) 843-2222 – it's a chance to see the "bloom of '95" and perform a service at the same time.

HARBOR SEALS IMPERILED

Mary Ellen King, ACR board member and researcher, has been carrying out a Harbor Seal disturbance study on Tomales Bay for the past 5 years. Her findings are far from encouraging. Boaters and clam diggers regularly flush seals and their pups from haul-out sites on Clam and Seal islands. The islands are little more than mud bars exposed by low tides. They are isolated and should provide a perfect resting site for the seals. However, the 130-passenger Clam Clipper brings as many as 7 loads of eager clambers to the islands on days with ideal low tides. With these hundreds of visitors come some who decide to dig for clams beneath the herd of resting seals. Boaters and kayakers often land their crafts amid the resting seals. Whatever the impact, the shy seals and their pups flee for the safety of Tomales Bay.

It gets even worse. Dogs accompany their owners to the islands. They are frequently observed roaming without benefit of a leash or the effort of voice control. As you might expect, the Marine Mammal Center has documented cases of Harbor Seal pups suffering from dog bites.

There are other impacts as well. Studies carried out by Sarah Allen during the past 20 years indicate Harbor Seals in Tomales Bay only have about half the pupping success as those found elsewhere in West Marin.

The future for Tomales Bay Harbor Seals doesn't seem too bright. Lawson's Landing, the owner of the Clam Clipper, is planning to double the size of its campground and, therefore, its general operation. Kayaking and boating on Tomales Bay is booming. There is little likelihood we will see increased enforcement of existing laws since budget cuts have already reduced field personnel in agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Our researchers suggest several courses of action which might well reduce impacts on Harbor Seals while not restricting or eliminating clamming or boating on Tomales Bay during pupping season. The main thrust of their efforts is educational in scope. For example, they would like to particularly target Nick's

Cove, Lawson's Landing, and Millerton Point. During low tides it would seem appropriate to cordon-off the haul-out sites to discourage human incursion. Water access is a different problem, but perhaps buoys could be used to restrict access to haul-out sites at Clam and Seal islands and to the mid-bay Hog Island where boaters have all but eliminated the haul-out site. Of course, the final suggestion is to increase supervision of the Marine Mammals Protection Act by federal agencies. Without knowing too much more than I've written here, I would like to see a complete ban on dogs at the clamming sites.

If you agree that this is a problem which should receive some attention from regulatory agencies, why not drop a line to one of them. Try Lisa Querin, Special Agent, National Marine Fisheries, 777 Sonoma Ave., #203, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. Then there is Tom Moore, Biologist, California Department of Fish and Game, 1136 Duer Rd., Sebastopol, CA 95472.

BUTTERFLY COUNTS

Join one or both of our traditional butterfly counts:

June 24: Bolinas Lagoon Preserve

June 25: Bouverie Preserve

Call (415) 868-9422 to get the details.

PANAMA COMMITTEE

Some members of the Panama Committee hope to make a trip to Panama later this year, visiting with members of Sociedad Audubon de Panama in Panama City and then birding in the rain forest, to become familiar with the terrain and lay plans for future trips. Promoting ecotourism as a conservation strategy and fundraiser is one of several ideas the Committee is considering for partnering with Panama. At the April meeting a preliminary itinerary was discussed, to be developed further after consultation with members of Panama Audubon.

California Dept. of Fish and Game has an environmental curriculum with an intercultural emphasis that may be of use in providing outreach to classrooms here and in Panama. Rick Parmer, Supervisor of Interpretive Services, has worked in Honduras and Costa Rica doing curriculum development, and will be invited to talk about the program at a future committee meeting.

Ten pairs of binoculars donated by Mt. Diablo Audubon and one scope from a Berkeley member were delivered to Panama Audubon by Borja Mila, a PRBO researcher visiting in Panama.

Future Panama Committee Meetings

June 12: home of Jean & Ernie Lucken, Oakland (510/530-4184)

August 21: home of Miles & Mary Ellen McKey, Berkeley (510/652-5854)

Observations: April 6 - May 5

Daniel Singer

LOONS TO DUCKS

Diligent sea watching from Pigeon Point, SM, produced the majority of tube-nose reports. Some highlights include three Black-footed Albatrosses April 15 and four April 18 (RSTh); one Pink-footed Shearwater April 17 (PJM) and three May 2 (BMcK); 7400 Sooty Shearwaters April 15 (RSTh) and hundreds more on subsequent sea watches during the remainder of the month. A small invasion of Fork-tailed Storm-petrels occurred along the coast between April 16 and 20. One off Pigeon Point on April 16 (RSTh, PJM) was followed by up to six at Princeton Harbor, SM, April 18 (RSTh), one at Ano Nuevo April 18 (fide RSTh), two at Dillon Beach, MRN, April 19 (CVn), and up to five off the Santa Cruz Wharf April 18-20 (PRa, CBx). As is often the case when we are lucky enough to see a few, Monterey was inundated. On the morning of April 18, up to 150 Fork-taileds were at Monterey Harbor and the number peaked that evening at 300. Approximately 150 were still present the next morning and it is thought that some lingered until April 20 or 21. Predation by Western Gulls was noted April 19 (fide DR).

Upwards of 1300 White-faced Ibises, observed at Mendota NWR, FRE, April 23 (PJM) going to and from a nesting area, is heartening. The **Emperor Goose** at Bodega, SON, continued through the EOP. A "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal continued at Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, through April 20 (KH) and another was seen at Rush Creek Marsh in Novato, MRN, April 29 (LLu). Eurasian Wigeons were at Alviso, SCL, April 12 (PJM) and Bolinas Lagoon May 2 (LCo). Harlequin Ducks remained at the Richmond Marina, CC, April 22 (CRn) and at outer Point Reyes, MRN, May 2 (LCo). Up to two Oldsquaws were still at Princeton Harbor as of May 2 (BMcK), another was at Hayward Regional Shoreline, April 2-9 (RSa, AWi) and five others were seen along the coast April 15-24 in SM, MRN and DN (m.ob.).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A Rough-legged Hawk being mobbed by two American Crows in Hayward, ALA, April 11 (DL) was unusual considering this species apparent scarceness during the winter.

Wintering Pacific Golden-Plovers were last reported from Pt. Reyes on May 2 (LCo). Four regular-but-scarce Solitary Sandpipers were noted in SM, SCL and MRN April 23-May 3, but one April 8 in Bodega (DHo) appears to be the region's earliest-ever record. A breeding-plumaged Semipalmated Sandpiper on the Albany mudflats, ALA, April 23 must have been a nice surprise (JM, LRF). Also at this spot was a Western Sandpiper banded in Ecuador (JM). Other notable wader reports include a Baird's Sandpiper in Alviso, SCL, April 17 (PJM) and Stilt Sandpipers in Novato, April 22 (RS) and Alviso, May 1-4 (AME, PJM).

Migrant Franklin's Gulls were noted in Orrick, HUM, April 15-16 (RS, BED) and at Pigeon Pt. April 30-May 2 (RSTh, BMcK). An adult **Little Gull** flew by Pigeon Pt., April 11 (BS) and an immature was discovered in Alviso, May 4 (PJM). A **Common Black-headed Gull** was seen at the mouth of Sulphur Creek in Hayward, April 11 (RJR). It obviously pays to search flocks of Bonaparte's. A single Glaucous Gull was reported from Alviso, April 12-16 (PJM, MMR). Two Elegant Terns at the mouth of Pescadero Creek, SM, April 30 (DPo) were early, but certainly not unprecedented. A Least Tern was considered "very early" at Bay Farm Island, ALA, April 8 (LRF) based on 20 years of experience with the species there. Three more on April 11 off Pigeon Pt. (BS) were equally early, but, as of April 23, no more had yet turned up at the Alameda Naval Air Station so the early birds were an anomaly. Three Black Skimmers at Moss Landing, MTY, May 2 (TdN) were probably headed our way.

A review of slides of dead, beached animals for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration by Stallcup

revealed a fresh **Parakeet Auklet** photographed March 12 at Limantour Beach at Point Reyes.

HUMMINGBIRDS TO GOLDFINCHES

Black-chinned Hummingbirds were in evidence at expected locations such as Coyote Creek, SCL, April 8 (LCh) and Bethel Island, CC, April 19-May 2 (m.ob.). Not expected was one at a feeder in West Marin April 22 (RS) where there are less than 10 records. Costa's Hummingbirds were also reported from typical sites like Del Puerto Canyon Rd., STA, April 10-30 (m.ob.) and New Idria Rd., SBT, April 17 (GFi) and not-so-typical sites such as San Jose, May 3 (SCR) and two along Arroyo Seco Rd., MTY, May 6 (DSg, DR). A Calliope Hummingbird in El Granada, SM, April 24 (BS) was a rare coastal migrant.

Hammond's Flycatchers can be a fairly common migrant through the interior coastal ranges, as evidenced by an impressive 19 on Mt. Diablo in Mitchell and White canyons April 13 (SGI) and 10 in White Canyon April 19 (KGH). Gray and Dusky flycatchers are decidedly less common migrants through these areas, though both are encountered annually. All three species, especially Gray and Dusky, are rare along the coast and uncommon in the Central Valley during spring. Gray Flycatchers were reported on Mt. Diablo, CC, April 14 (NCr) and near Los Banos, MER, April 22 (PJM).

Migrant warblers such as Nashville and Black-throated Gray were widely reported during the month, mostly from the East Bay hills. A singing male Northern Parula April 26 at Olema Marsh, MRN, (RS) may well be a returning local breeder. Two Palm Warblers were at outer Pt. Reyes, April 8-22 (LLu, DZi) and April 9 (BWk). A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was observed at Glen Canyon Park, SF, April 15 (DZi), but more unusual in SF was a male Blue Grosbeak in the Presidio April

28 (MLR). The wintering Green-tailed Towhee in San Jose was last seen April 9 (SCR). Migrant White-throated Sparrows were noted on Mt. Diablo April 15 (CC) and in coastal SM April 24 (BS) and May 2 (GDe). The Chestnut-collared Longspurs at the summit of Sierra Road east of San Jose were last noted April 10 (BRe).

A Great-tailed Grackle was in Alviso, April 28-29 (SBT, MiF) and the Seott's Oriole found last month in SF was seen again April 9 at Strawberry Hill in Golden Gate Park (ASH). Two Red Crossbills along Cloverdale Rd., SM April 12 (PJM) were the only reports of this species in some time. In contrast to some springs, Lawrence's Goldfinches were not widely reported and those that were consisted of groups of 10 or less.

The monthly observation column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box or to the author. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses". In general, birds in boldface are very rare in our region, geographically or seasonally. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959 for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC secretary at the address above.

Observers: Clifford Bixler, Chris Carpenter (CC), Les Chibana (LCh), Luke Cole (LCo), Chris Corben (CCo), Nathan Crawford, Gary Deghi, Bruce Deuel, Al Eisner, Leora Feeney, Mike Feighner, George Finger, Steve Glover, Keith Hansen (KH), Kevin Hintsu (KGH), David Hofmann, Alan Hopkins, Leslie Lieurance, Donna Lion, Bert McKee, Peter Metropoulos, Joe Morlan, Todd Newberry, David Powell, Peter Radcliff, Bob Reiling (BRe), Bob Richmond (RJR), Don Roberson, Mike Rogers (MMR), Mary Louise Rosegay, Steve Rottenborn, C. Runyon, Barry Sauppe, Rusty Scalf (RSa), Dan Singer, Rich Stallcup (RS), Scott Terrill, Ron Thorn, Charles Vaughn, Bruce Walker, Anna Wilcox, Debey Zito.

Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Bird Box.

Abbreviations for counties: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; DN, Del Norte; FRE, Fresno; HUM, Humboldt; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MER, Merced; MTY, Monterey; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SON, Sonoma; STA, Stanislaus

Back Yard Birder

Meg Pauletich

On a sparkling April day, Dick and I found ourselves alone on the beach and perched on one of the bleached logs tossed ashore during the winter storms. Fishing and sail boats drifted lazily on the calm sea. A lone Black Oystercatcher flew in and alit near the stream of fresh water still flowing from the rain-sogged hills. It was soon joined and greeted by its mate with a chorus of piping notes and a good deal of head-bobbing and bird body language. The pair set about refreshing themselves with long drinks of water.

What struck me was their rather odd method of drinking. Most birds dip their beaks into water, take a mouthful and then tilt the head back, allowing the water to pass into the esophagus. When the head is tilted back the glottis automatically closes, preventing water from flowing into the windpipe. This same involuntary reflex is used when the bird swallows food. A second method of drinking is used by pigeons, doves and a few other birds. They suck in water, rather like a horse does, holding the water in the mouth and then swallowing with a pumping motion in the throat. Hummingbirds use their tubular tongues to drink from wet vegetation while aerial species such as swifts and swallows skim water from the surface of a pond or lake.

The Black Oystercatcher's unique style was to tilt its head forward until its crayon-red bill was literally upside down, as was its head. Then the upper bill was used to scoop up water accompanied by some opening and closing of the lower bill. Something was familiar about this posture. Aha! The Greater Flamingo feeds with its bill upside down as it filters its food from shallow water. A further oddity was that instead of pointing the bill upstream, both birds did the opposite. It would seem easier to catch water flowing downstream to me -- but I'm not an oystercatcher. It did not appear that there were feeding since they occasionally would raise their heads and swallow without "crunching" anything in their bills. Both persisted in this awkward behavior, sort of "chasing" the water. When their thirst was slaked, they flew to a nearby rock island to begin a search for mussels. They use their stout bills to pry off a mussel, then hammer a hole on the flat surface and cut the strong adductor muscle

which holds the two halves of the shell together. Once this muscle is severed, the bird uses its bill to pry it apart, chiselling out the meat with scissor-like movements. This pair was probably bonding before mating. The eggs are usually laid in May and then incubated by both parents for 25-28 days. After 5 weeks of shellfish and marine worms the young can fly and are taught by their parents the intricacies of utilizing their highly-specialized bills.

Like all animals, water is essential to birds since their bodies are made up of a considerable amount of water. A great many birds receive the bulk of their water needs from the solid foods they ingest and they seldom seem to drink. In arid areas, some species can go long periods without water. This is partly because birds don't excrete large quantities of water as urine, but reabsorb most fluids internally.

Birds will drink from all sorts of available water: pools, springs, ditches, mud puddles, birdbaths, etc. Desert species depend upon insects and other invertebrates as well as succulent plants to fulfill their moisture requirements. Sandgrouse in Africa have devised a novel method of getting water back to their young. The male has special modified abdominal feathers which absorb water better than the rest of his plumage. He flies up to 50 miles a day, in the morning, to watering holes. There he soaks up water in his belly feathers and streaks "home" to the chicks which are hiding under desert scrub. Upon his arrival, they crowd around him, resembling a litter of puppies as they strip water from his feathers with their bills. For up to 2 months, they depend on Dad for daily drinks.

Seabirds take in food much saltier than their body fluids. To counteract this, salt glands located on the skull above the eyes concentrate salt from the blood: salt droplets are excreted through the nostrils or mouth. I've seen gulls sipping fresh water and the oystercatchers certainly needed to augment their water too.

After hiking back up the trail from the beach I was extremely relieved to simply pour cold water into a glass and gulp it down with relative ease . . . much easier than tipping my head upside down over a shallow stream!

Field Trips Calendar

Friday-Sunday, June 2-4

Birding by Ear in Yosemite

The lower and middle elevations of Yosemite National Park are alive with singing birds in early June. A variety of habitats support a rich diversity of birdlife, typically including seven flycatchers (four Empidonax), three vireos, seven warblers, and many other species in full song and breeding plumage. Meet at the Big Oak Flat entrance on Friday, June 2, at 3 p.m., and on Saturday, June 3, at 7 a.m. (If you arrive later Saturday morning, meet the group in Hodgdon Meadow behind the Hodgdon Meadow Group Campsites.) The meeting place is the large parking lot 100 yards inside the park entrance on Hwy. 120 (30 miles from Yosemite Valley).

Nearby campgrounds include Hodgdon Meadow (reservation required) and Crane Flat in the Park; Carlon and Middle Fork (primitive Forest Service campgrounds) on the road to Hetch Hetchy, and Sweetwater on Hwy. 120.

Lodging on Hwy. 120 includes Yosemite Gatehouse (209) 379-2260, Evergreen Lodge (209) 379-2606, Lee's Middle Fork (209) 962-7408, and Buck Meadows Lodge (209) 962-6366.

Bring warm clothes, raingear, rubber boots (wet meadows). Be prepared to pack a lunch and walk about six miles. Leader: Dave Cornman. (510) 825-2106 \$ (*)

Wednesday, June 14

Mini-trip to Redwood Regional Park

Meet in the park at 9:30 a.m. Take the Warren Freeway (Hwy. 13), exit onto Redwood Rd., and proceed east about three miles to Redwood Gate, southern entrance to the park. Meet just inside park in small parking lot on the left. We should see Black-headed Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush, Northern Oriole, Solitary, Hutton's and Warbling vireos. Bring lunch. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday-Sunday, June 17-18

Yuba Pass and vicinity

On Saturday, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Yuba Pass Summit parking area (Hwy. 49), 15 miles east of Sierra City. Take I-80 to Truckee, go north on Hwy. 89 to Sierraville, and take Hwy. 49 west to Yuba Summit. (Or take Hwy. 49 northeast from Auburn for a slower but more scenic route.) We will bird the mountain areas for summer residents including dippers, flycatchers, warblers, and Calliope Hummingbirds.

On Sunday, meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of Hwy. 49 and 89 (by the saw mill) about 1 mile north of Sattley. We will caravan to Sierra Valley and look for many of the birds of the eastern Sierra including White-faced Ibis, Sandhill Cranes, Sage Thrashers and Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

Camping is available at the following U. S. Forest Service campgrounds off Hwy. 49: Wild Plum (elev. 3300') 2 mi. east of

Sierra City, and Chapman Creek (elev. 5800') 8 mi. east of Sierra City. Lodging is available at Sierra City: Sierra Chalet (916) 862-1110, Buttes Motel (916) 862-1170, Herringtons's Sierra Pines (916) 862-1151, Basset Station Motel (916) 862-1297, Sierra Buttes Inn Motel (916) 862-1191, and Yuba River Inn (916) 862-1122. Leader: Peter Allen. (415) 892-8063

Friday-Sunday, June 23-25

Lassen Volcanic National Park

Join the Murphy family on the annual GGAS family camping excursion to Lassen. In past years, we have seen Willow, Hammond's, and Dusky flycatchers, Black Swift, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Calliope Hummingbird, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker and most of the warblers and finches that breed in the mountains.

The more serious birders will meet at the Manzanita Lake Campground store at 6:30 a.m. on Friday and again on Sunday. We will bird around the lake for 2-3 hours, return to camp for a quick breakfast, then rendezvous again at the store at 10:30 a.m. for another outing. The Friday outing will be a leisurely hike of about 3 miles on one of Lassen's beautiful trails. (We may climb as much as 700 feet.) Wear sturdy shoes and bring lunch and liquids. Suntan lotion, a hat, mosquito repellent, and warm clothing may also be necessary.

Saturday is a special day for everyone. We will meet by the camp store at 7:30 a.m. and caravan north to Burney Falls, Fall River Valley, and Baum Lake. Bring lunch and liquids. This all-day excursion of about 100 miles will include a 2- or 3-hour swim at Lake Britton while watching Bald Eagles. (If you forget your swimsuit, the trails at Burney Park offer a wonderful diversion, and fishermen can try their luck in some of Northern California's finest trout streams.)

Since this is a long and tiring day, we suggest a get-together for dinner at a nearby restaurant instead of returning to the campstove. Stop by our campsite for further information. We will have a campfire every evening beginning at 8 p.m. Bring your own chair (and a cup of wine if you choose). We will provide hot water for tea or coffee. Check the campground bulletin boards or the office at Hat Creek Resort for our poster, campsite number, and any last-minute changes in the schedule.

For the Sunday outing, we will meet at 10:30 a.m. to drive through the park, making frequent stops for birding. We should reach the south entrance around 1 p.m., depending upon how long we play in the snow at the summit. For this final event, bring warm gloves, a plastic trash bag for a mini-toboggan, and a camera.

From the Bay Area, drive north on I-5 to its junction with Hwy. 44 in Redding. Go east on Hwy. 44 to the northwest entrance of Lassen. Camping facilities are available at Manzanita Lake.

Lodging is available about 15 miles north of the park at Hat Creek Resort, Old Station (916) 335-7121. Other information can be obtained from the park headquarters, Mineral, CA 96063.

Leaders: Dan and Joan Murphy. (415) 564-0074

Thursday-Sunday, July 6-9
Backpacking Trip to Snag Lake,
Lassen Volcanic National Park

Leaders: David Rice and Robin Pulich
We will backpack in three miles to Snag Lake and spend three nights in primitive camping by a stream near a large meadow. We should see a flock of mixed warblers and other songbirds that summer in Lassen, plus resident birds of the mountains, Bald Eagles, and perhaps some migrating shorebirds. We will be above 6,000 feet elevation in beautiful country!

To avoid impact in fragile habitat, this trip is limited to twelve people. Everyone will be responsible for his/her own gear and food, although some cooperative or shared meals may be arranged. For details call David Rice (510) 527-7210 \$ (*).

Saturday-Sunday, July 29-30
Yosemite Alpine Ecology

On Saturday, July 29, we will revisit a favorite loop trip to Cathedral Lake, Upper Cathedral Lake, Cathedral Pass, and Budd Lake. After this year's heavy snow there should be gorgeous scenery with ample wildflowers on our five-and-a-half to six-mile hike, with elevation gain of 2,000 feet. On Sunday, we will have a shorter hike, returning to our cars by 3 p.m.

Due to its popularity, this trip will be **by reservation only, and the number of participants will be strictly limited**. If you are interested, please call George Peyton as soon as possible.

This trip is not primarily a birding trip, but will emphasize general alpine ecology. All participants should be in good physical condition, with reasonable experience in hiking and climbing at elevations of 8,000 to 11,000 feet, which is where we will be. Participants should bring a lunch and ample liquids each day; a hat, water-repellent jacket, sun lotion, mosquito repellent and good walking

shoes or boots with treaded soles (no smooth-soled tennis or other shoes, please). We will possibly be traversing snow fields after the heavy winter snows in the Sierra.

County and Forest Service campgrounds are located between Tioga Pass and Lee Vining off Hwy. 120 (4 to 6 miles west of Hwy. 395), as well as Tuolumne Meadows Campground in Yosemite. Motels in Lee Vining include Best Western Lakeview Lodge (619) 647-6543, Gateway Motel (619) 647-6467, and Murphey's Motel (619) 647-6316. For trip reservation and meeting details call:

Leader: George Peyton (510) 444-3131 (weekdays) \$ (*)

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (*).

Problems: if you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chair (510) 524-2399.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Nominating Committee has proposed the following slate of candidates for officers for the next year. Please mark your ballot and return to the GGAS office by June 30, 1995.

BALLOT

President (thru 6/96)

☐ Janice Andersen

1st Vice President (thru 6/96)

☐ Debey Zito

Recording Secretary (thru 6/96)

☐ Leslie Lethridge

Treasurer (thru 6/96)

☐ Kay Loughman

East Bay Director (thru 6/98)

☐ Carolyn Kolka

West Bay Director (thru 6/98)

☐ Michael Healy

Please vote for one candidate for each office and mail your ballot to:

Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, CA 94702

DON'T SIT IDLY BY AND WATCH THE NATURAL WORLD GO AWAY

If you have been reading *The Gull* the last few months you know how badly environmental matters are going in Washington, DC, and in Sacramento. Last month we reported on Governor Wilson's all-out attack on the California Endangered Species Act. This month, we bring you up to date on efforts to weaken or abolish the federal Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act.

As this is written, Congress is voting on a Clean Water Act which, if signed into law, will negate all of our progress in cleaning up our waters and saving wetlands. Framers of this act mock scientific definitions and openly allow industry lobbyists to write the legislation.

This is not the year to sit idly by as Congress contemplates oil drilling on our California coast; oil drilling and mining in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge; and elimination of many national parks. The list is endless. As never before, we must let our legislators know of our concern for clean water, for wetlands, and for wildlife. One of the easiest and most effective ways to do this is to become an Armchair Activist.

What is an Armchair Activist? It's someone too busy to spend a lot of time on environmental issues, but with a free half-hour a month to spend on writing a letter. Our Armchair Activists receive one mailing a month from GGAS. It's a four-page letter that talks about the month's issue (in May, it was the vote on the Clean Water Act) in clear and simple terms. It contains a sample letter to help in drafting your letter and provides the name and address of the person to whom to send the letter. It makes letter writing easy. A half-hour of your time and you have done your best for our world.

Please call or write the GGAS office and join the rapidly increasing number of Armchair Activists who want to fight back against greed and destruction

